

REMHDCO

Racial & Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition

June 2008 Report to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

The Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition or *REMHDCO* is a statewide stakeholder in the mental health community. Several members serve as volunteers on the OAC's Cultural and Linguistic Technical Resource Group (CLCTRG) and some of the committees (PEI and Innovations). REMHDCO is an active member of the MHSA Community Partners group. We are a statewide coalition of non-profit state wide and local organizations, consumers and family members, whose mission is *to work to reduce mental health disparities through advocacy for racial and ethnic communities*.

- I. REMHDCO will be holding an information and membership recruitment event at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 25th, coinciding with the OAC's meeting in San Jose. OAC Commissioners and staff are welcome to attend and will be receiving invitations.
- II. Several REMHDCO members participated in a meeting for cultural brokers sponsored by the Department of Mental Health on June 3, 2008. This was a follow-up meeting to the meeting of February 27th regarding the stakeholder process and an update on the plans for the PEI statewide project for reducing ethnic disparities.

The Department intends to fund both the stakeholder recommendations of February 27th and a planning process for the reducing disparities statewide project. While REMHDCO commends the Department for showing this commitment to serving racial and ethnic communities, *we do not support combining these two different activities into one RFP*. In addition, we believe that the Department should gather more stakeholder input before releasing this RFP.

REMHDCO will outline our concerns in more detail in a letter to the Department that will be available by the OAC meeting on June 26th in San Jose.

- III. REMHDCO would like to acknowledge the June 6th letter sent by the State Department of Mental Health regarding our concerns with the implementation of the Statewide Client and Family Member Technical Assistance Center. Although REMHDCO will continue to participate in the implementation of this project, we appreciate the Department's support that *this resource be developed such that clients and family members from racial and ethnic communities, as well as those communities themselves, benefit from this project*.